

**REMARKS**

In the present Amendment, claims 1, 10, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 and 29 have been rewritten to positively recite the steps.

Further, claim 1 has been amended to recite a step of filtering the cellulose acylate solution by a cake layer supported by a support wherein the cake layer is formed by pre-coating a filter aid to the support. This amendment is supported by the specification, for example, page 11, line 30-page 12, line 1 and page 15, line 29-page 16, line 2.

Claim 1 has also been amended to add a transitional phrase.

Claims 2, 14-19, 22 and 30 have been amended to improve their form.

Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1-32 will be all the claims pending in the application.

**I. Drawings**

The Examiner has not indicated whether the drawings filed with the application have been accepted. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge such acceptance in the next PTO communication.

**II. Response to Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph**

At page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Specifically, it is asserted: (i) that it is unclear as to the manipulative steps in claim 1; (ii) that claim 1 lacks a transitional phrase; and (iii) that the claims omit an essential step of “forming.”

Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are not indefinite. Specifically, in the present Amendment, Applicants have rewritten various claims to positively recite the steps in the process. Claim 1 has also been amended to add the transitional phrase “comprising.” Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

### **III. Response to Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

At page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over “Applicant’s Admitted Prior Art” (“AAPA”) and *The Handbook of Separation Techniques for Chemical Engineers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (1988) (“Handbook”).

Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are patentable over AAPA and Handbook for at least the following reasons.

As noted above, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the cellulose acylate solution is filtered by a cake layer supported by a support wherein the cake layer is formed by pre-coating a filter aid to the support. In contrast, none of AAPA and Handbook disclose or suggest this feature of the present invention. Therefore, even if there might be motivation to combination AAPA and Handbook, the resultant still would not be the presently claimed invention.

Further, a cellulose acylate solution for preparing a cellulose acylate film by solution film-forming method has high viscosity. Consequently, when filter paper, filter cloth, sintered metal or the like is used as a filtering material for the filtration as in the conventional technique, pores of any of these filtering materials may be plugged with time, causing a sudden increase of pressure difference in the remaining period of the filtration. Therefore, if filter paper, filter cloth, sintered metal or the like is used as a filtering material for the filtration, lifetime of the filtration cannot be extended.

The present invention solves the above problems in the art by precoating a filter aid on a coarse-mesh support and body-feeding the filter aid into the cellulose acylate solution. Even for a cellulose acylate solution having high viscosity, the lifetime of the filtration can be extended while keeping high absolute filtration accuracy.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are not obvious over the cited references, and thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

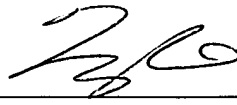
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
U.S. Application No.: 10/620,412

Attorney Docket Q76591

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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